

104TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 2899

To establish within the Department of Energy a National Test and Demonstration Center of Excellence at the Nevada Test Site, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 25, 1996

Mrs. VUCANOVICH (for herself and Mr. ENSIGN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on National Security, and in addition to the Committees on Science and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish within the Department of Energy a National Test and Demonstration Center of Excellence at the Nevada Test Site, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Center for
5 Excellence in Research and Development Act of 1996”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Due to the end of the Cold War, the United
2 States has not recently conducted underground nu-
3 clear testing at the Department of Energy facility
4 known as the Nevada Test Site, Nevada, and the
5 United States does not plan to conduct such testing
6 in the foreseeable future.

7 (2) Because the world political situation is ever-
8 changing and dangerous, it is imperative that the
9 United States remain strong militarily and continue
10 to be a nuclear superpower.

11 (3) It is imperative that portions of the Nevada
12 Test Site be maintained in a full state of readiness
13 to ensure the capability of the nuclear arsenal of the
14 United States.

15 (4) The Nevada Test Site is in a beneficial loca-
16 tion for activities suitable for research and develop-
17 ment of emerging technologies that will be important
18 to the United States in the 21st century.

19 (5) Technology development carried out at the
20 Nevada Test Site should include both private-sector
21 and military projects.

22 (6) The Nevada Test Site can support the stew-
23 ardsip of the Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile,
24 the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, and the
25 technological competitiveness of the United States

1 by providing the environment for nuclear and non-
2 nuclear test and demonstration experiments and
3 projects for government, industry, and academia.

4 (7) The Nevada Test Site can provide the infra-
5 structure to support industrial and civilian tests of
6 environmentally demanding projects and programs
7 in addition to maintaining its readiness capability in
8 support of the nuclear arsenal.

9 (8) The Nevada Test Site can support the test-
10 ing and demonstration of environmental clean-up
11 technologies by government and industry.

12 (9) The Nevada Test Site can support the test-
13 ing of alternative and renewable energy sources for
14 environmentally clean and economically competitive
15 replacements for traditional fossil energy sources
16 and uses in many parts of Nevada and in the United
17 States as a whole.

18 (10) The Nevada Test Site can provide support
19 for disarmament activities such as the demonstration
20 of rocket motor destruction technology and conven-
21 tional munitions destruction technology.

22 (11) The Nevada Test Site can support non-
23 proliferation experiments in disablement, nuclear
24 forensics, sensors, and verification and monitoring.

1 (12) The Nevada Test Site can support treaty-
2 compliant experiments for stockpile stewardship pur-
3 poses.

4 (13) The size and remoteness of the Nevada
5 Test Site make the Nevada Test Site well-suited for
6 a multitude of activities associated with the restruc-
7 turing of the United States military.

8 (14) The Nevada Test Site can also support
9 non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, and counter-
10 terrorism activities.

11 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

12 It is the purpose of this Act—

13 (1) to ensure full operational readiness of the
14 underground nuclear testing facilities and infrastruc-
15 ture of the Nevada Test Site;

16 (2) to ensure an appropriate level of funds for
17 such readiness to be maintained;

18 (3) to create a National Test and Demonstra-
19 tion Center of Excellence at the Nevada Test Site
20 for the promotion of disarmament, demilitarization,
21 alternative and renewable energy sources, the non-
22 proliferation of nuclear weapons, counter-prolifera-
23 tion of nuclear weapons, sensor development, and
24 environmentally sensitive technologies; and

1 (4) to ensure the availability of the Nevada
2 Test Site, within appropriate restrictions, for use by
3 private-sector industries seeking to make use of the
4 inherent qualities that make the Nevada Test Site
5 the greatest outdoor laboratory in the world.

6 **SEC. 4. MAINTENANCE OF READINESS CAPABILITY OF NE-**
7 **VADA TEST SITE.**

8 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The amount referred to in
10 paragraph (2) is hereby authorized to be appro-
11 priated to the Secretary of Energy for fiscal year
12 1995 and each fiscal year thereafter to maintain the
13 operational readiness of the underground nuclear
14 testing facilities and infrastructure of the Nevada
15 Test Site.

16 (2) AUTHORIZED AMOUNT.—The amount re-
17 ferred to in paragraph (1) is not less than the
18 amount appropriated to the Secretary of Energy for
19 fiscal year 1992 to maintain the operational readi-
20 ness of the underground nuclear testing facilities
21 and infrastructure of the Nevada Test Site.

22 (b) STAFFING LEVELS.—The Secretary of Energy
23 shall maintain a staffing level at the Nevada Test Site
24 that the Secretary considers sufficient to carry out activi-
25 ties under this Act in addition to any other activities con-

1 ducted by the Department of Energy at the Nevada Test
2 Site.

3 (c) INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENTS AND ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of Energy, through the Nevada Test
4 TIES.—The Secretary of Energy, through the Nevada Test
5 Site Operations Office, shall carry out any infrastructure
6 assessments and activities necessary to accommodate new
7 projects and initiatives at the Nevada Test Site.

8 **SEC. 5. NATIONAL TEST AND DEMONSTRATION CENTER OF**
9 **EXCELLENCE.**

10 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established
11 within the Department of Energy a National Test and
12 Demonstration Center of Excellence (hereafter in this Act
13 referred to as the “Center”), to be located at the Nevada
14 Test Site, Nevada.

15 (b) PURPOSE.—It shall be the purpose of the Center
16 to promote disarmament, demilitarization, alternative and
17 renewable energy sources, the nonproliferation of nuclear
18 weapons, counter-proliferation of nuclear weapons, sensor
19 development, and environmentally sensitive technologies.

20 (c) ACTIVITIES RELATED TO ALTERNATIVE AND RE-
21 NEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES.—The Center shall carry out
22 the following testing and demonstration activities that are
23 related to alternative and renewable energy sources:

24 (1) The characterization of solar and geo-
25 thermal resources at the Nevada Test Site.

1 (2) The development of alternative and renew-
2 able energy sources, including, as a goal of the Cen-
3 ter, the development and completion of two 100-
4 megawatt solar power plants by the year 2000.

5 (3) The conduct of a National Alternative-
6 Fueled Vehicles Program, the objective of which
7 shall be to demonstrate the regional use of natural
8 gas, electricity, and hydrogen as vehicle fuels.

9 (d) ACTIVITIES RELATED TO DISARMAMENT AND
10 DEMILITARIZATION.—The Center shall carry out testing
11 and demonstration activities that are related to changes
12 occurring in United States military as a result of the end
13 of the Cold War, including activities—

14 (1) that involve the demilitarization of large
15 rocket motor and conventional ordnance;

16 (2) that assist in disarmament and demilitariza-
17 tion, generally; and

18 (3) that test and demonstrate the nonmilitary
19 application of technologies and resources the mili-
20 tary application of which has decreased or otherwise
21 changed due to disarmament and demilitarization.

22 (e) ACTIVITIES RELATED TO NUCLEAR STOCKPILE
23 STEWARDSHIP.—The Center shall carry out testing and
24 demonstration activities related to the stewardship of the

1 nuclear stockpile of the United States. Such activities shall
2 include—

3 (1) the conduct of experiments that assist in
4 monitoring compliance with international agreements
5 on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons;

6 (2) the provision of support to the Department
7 of Energy nuclear weapons complex;

8 (3) the conduct of programs for the Depart-
9 ment of Energy and the Department of Defense to
10 develop simulator technologies for nuclear weapons
11 design and effects, including advanced hydrodynamic
12 simulators, inertial confinement fusion test facilities,
13 and nuclear weapons effects simulators; and

14 (4) the conduct of the stockpile stewardship
15 program established pursuant to section 3138 of the
16 National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year
17 1994 (107 Stat. 1946; Public Law 103–160).

18 (f) ACTIVITIES RELATED TO NONPROLIFERATION.—
19 The Center shall carry out experiments related to the non-
20 proliferation of nuclear weapons, including experiments
21 with respect to disablement, nuclear forensics, sensors,
22 and verification and monitoring.

23 (g) ACTIVITIES RELATED TO COUNTER-PROLIFERA-
24 TION.—The Center shall carry out experiments related to
25 the counter-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

1 (h) ACTIVITIES RELATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL
2 TECHNOLOGIES.—The Center shall carry out testing and
3 demonstration activities related to the development of en-
4 vironmental technologies, including—

5 (1) the demonstration of technologies concern-
6 ing the remediation of toxic and hazardous chemi-
7 cals; and

8 (2) the conduct of training activities pertaining
9 to emergency response to hazardous and toxic acci-
10 dents and emergencies.

11 (i) OTHER ACTIVITIES.—The Center may carry out
12 the testing and demonstration of any other technology
13 which, in the determination of the Secretary of Energy,
14 is appropriate for testing and demonstration at the Ne-
15 vada Test Site.

16 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

17 Except as provided in section 4, there is authorized
18 to be appropriated to the Secretary of Energy for fiscal
19 year 1997 such sums as may be necessary to carry out
20 this Act.

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